

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claim 11 as shown below.

1. (Original) A ride plate positioning mechanism for a personal watercraft having a craft body, an engine and a jet propeller driven by said engine, such that said personal watercraft is capable of being propelled by jet water generated by said jet propeller,

said ride plate positioning mechanism comprising:

a removable ride plate for defining a bottom portion of a stern of said craft body, said ride plate comprising a pair of integrally formed left and right positioning projections projecting upwardly at a front portion of said ride plate, said positioning projections having front faces for contacting said craft body; and

a pair of left and right tab stops formed in said craft body of said watercraft, for contacting the front faces of said positioning projections.

1           2. (Original) The ride plate positioning mechanism of claim 1, wherein the ride plate  
2 further comprises an elevated arresting member extending outwardly at the front end thereof,  
3 for stabilizing placement on a support piece.

1           3. (Original) The ride plate positioning mechanism of claim 2, wherein the elevated  
2 arresting member is narrower than the widest part of said ride plate.

1           4. (Original) The ride plate positioning mechanism of claim 4, wherein said craft  
2 body comprises a stator and a dependent ridge which extends downwardly adjacent said  
3 stator, and wherein said projecting tabs fit nestingly between said tap stops and said  
4 dependent ridge.

1           5. (Original) The ride plate positioning mechanism of claim 1, wherein said ride  
2 plate includes side edge portions which are raised up in relation to adjoining portions of said  
3 ride plate.

1           6. (Original) The ride plate positioning mechanism of claim 5, wherein said craft  
2 body has an opening formed in said bottom portion of said stern with a pair of shallow,

3 spaced apart stepped recesses formed at the sides of said opening to receive said side edge  
4 portions of said ride plate.

1 7. (Original) The ride plate positioning mechanism of claim 1, wherein said  
2 positioning projections have flattened front faces which are substantially vertically oriented.

1 8. (Original) The ride plate positioning mechanism of claim 1, wherein said  
2 positioning projections are constructed and arranged to have a substantially rectangular  
3 horizontal cross-sectional shape.

1 9. (Original) The ride plate positioning mechanism of claim 1, wherein said ride  
2 plate further comprises at least one raised rib extending transversely across an upper surface  
3 thereof behind said positioning projections.

1 10. (Original) The ride plate positioning mechanism of claim 9, wherein said ride  
2 plate has a plurality of spaced-apart raised ribs on said upper surface thereof.

1 11. (Currently amended) A method of aligning a removable ride plate with a stern of  
2 a personal watercraft, comprising the steps of:

3 placing opposed front corners of said ride plate between opposed stepped recesses  
4 formed in a bottom surface of a stern of said watercraft,

5 sliding said ride plate forwardly until a pair of integrally formed left and right  
6 positioning projections on an upper front portion of said ride plate contact a pair of left and  
7 right tab stops formed in said watercraft stern.

1 12. (Original) The method of claim 11, further comprising a step of pivotally moving  
2 said ride plate until the side edges thereof fit into said stepped recesses.

1 13. (Original) The method of claim 11, further comprising a step of attaching said  
2 ride plate to said watercraft body with fasteners.

1 14. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein said watercraft stern comprises a  
2 substantially vertical transverse wall face, and wherein said tab stops are formed as part of  
3 said substantially vertical transverse wall face.